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Gunton Woodland Community Project

NEWSLETTER

September October November December 2011

Seasons Greetings to all our Members



Woodland Notes

It is mid November. With blue skies and little wind it doesn't feel like Winter. Nature too is puzzled, some shrubs are flowering yet again and blackbirds have been seen collecting nesting material. We are heading for the driest Autumn ever which means that we have missed out on much of the annual show of **fungi**, although we did see this huge bracket close to our Thursday morning coffee spot. Work party numbers are running consistently above 30, spirits are high and there is nearly always a Birthday excuse for buns, cakes and pastries, plus of course, a chance to socialize after performing the Labours of Hercules.



Dryad's Saddle



The New Fence

The annual tree inspection with Waveney Norse arboriculturalist Paul McDowell-Veitch revealed the usual problems with Dutch elm disease while some of the goat willows in Moore's Lane are now splitting at the base, posing a hazard to walkers. This has tested David and Colin's chainsaw skills and the felled timber has been used to rebuild the fence to battleship standard as well as providing replacement path edging. Our intentions to purchase a

scaffold platform to permit topping elms and sycamores so as to leave standing deadwood were thwarted by our insurers so we are being forced to fell them if they are deemed to be dangerous to the public. But we are continuously re-planting and another 100 whips are planned this Winter in addition to the 4500 plus already in the ground. Meanwhile our ladies have performed sterling work, path chipping, "alexandering", coppicing elders, weeding, brambling and bolstering the morale of the menfolk.

In the Nature Reserve the main task has been to clear bur reed from the top pond. This involves getting muddied up to the eyebrows with lots of "brute force and intelligence" and it's all good fun (in small doses). But we are still only halfway through and haven't yet cracked the problem of how to stop it growing again.... any suggestions would be welcomed.

We have made progress in Foxburrow Wood by completing another phase of the Suffolk Foundation "Grassroots Scheme". Steps between the two large ponds had disintegrated and were quite dangerous in the wet so they have been rebuilt. New steps have been installed at the Burwood Place kissing gate and other achievements include a major clearance of brambles from the bluebell area and removing blockages from the Foxburrow Stream.



Colin and Gordon

It has been possible to organise several Saturday morning work parties which are much appreciated by those who are unable to attend on Thursdays. But we do need more help to make the Saturday option more effective so please volunteer if you can. David can give you the forward programme.

Planning

Normally we try to stay out of politics but the implications of the Government's current plans for revising the Planning Rules are so important that we have decided to participate in the Consultation process. Existing Planning Regulations ARE complicated and the Government's intention to reduce 1300 pages to 52 sounds like a good idea. But the draft National Planning Policy Framework is scary and, in our opinion, provides poor protection for the crucially important Strategic Gaps and Open Spaces around Lowestoft. Our objections can be found on the GWCP website or you can request a copy from any Committee member. We are fortunate that Waveney District Council is one of a minority of Local Authorities that has all the key Local Development Framework documents in place which does provide some confidence. Nevertheless WDC has lodged 16 pages of objections to the draft NPPF. We shall await a revised draft from the Government with great interest.

Congratulations

Whilst on the subject of Government we did receive a letter of congratulations from 10 Downing Street and DEFRA on the occasion of our 1000th Work Party....

Church Field Memorial Wood Project

At the insistence of the Environment Agency, another 8 boreholes have been dug across the field to permit regular measurements of ground water levels throughout the Winter months. It is intended that this data should enable identification of which areas would be suitable for green burials. The delay in scheme implementation is unfortunate as we are anxious to press ahead with tree planting as soon as possible.



Prime Irrigation at Work

The Social Scene

Snape Christmas Spectacular Friday 16th December 2011

All 66 seats for the matinée performance at Snape Maltings have been sold and we are sorry that some late requests have had to be declined. The coach will leave from Gunton St Peter's Church at 1 pm, returning about 7 pm. It should be a wonderful show and is always a great start to the Christmas festivities.

Work Party Dinner Tuesday 17th January 2012

After last year's successful "first", David has organised another celebratory dinner for Work Party volunteers and partners at the Lowestoft College Training Restaurant "East". No sooner was it announced than it was booked solid and this year we fill the entire restaurant. Either "best-bib-and-tucker" or "casual-smart" is fine.

Floriade Expo Holland Thursday 10th May to Monday 14th May 2012

Enthusiasm for our Continental excursion is running high. All seats have been booked but David can accept names for a reserve/standby list. Plans for the 4th day have now been firmed up. After a short coach ride to Maastricht most of us board the Stiphout boat for a cruise to Liège where there is an amazing riverside Sunday market. Final payments for the trip are due by 9th March 2012. David will give participants more details later.

The Birds' Best Friend



Martin Fuller

It's high time we said a very warm "thank you" to Martin Fuller. For 7 years, come rain or shine, Martin and his 4-legged friend Murphy visit every bird table in Gunton Wood replenishing them with a wonderful selection of fruit and nuts which he and Marie have paid for from their own pockets (*please don't add it up Martin!*) Blackbirds, tits and squirrels all love him to bits and you can hear them tweeting excitedly to each other ... "here he comes!" **Thank you, Martin, you are an inspiration to us all.**

Red Arrows Charity Bike Ride

We were delighted to be asked to provide bucket collectors at Ness Point for the Red Arrows 400 mile bike ride from St David's, Pembrokeshire to Lowestoft. We collected £158 for the charity led by Emma Egging, whose husband Jon was tragically killed during their flying display at Bournemouth in August. We would like to extend our warmest thanks to our 13 volunteers who helped with the collection and, of course, to David for organising it.



The Collectors

Cuttings

- **2012 Calendars** The "new look" calendar was well received and the full print run of 240 copies has been sold. Any comments on the new layout and printing would be much appreciated for future planning.
- **Gunton Primary "Freezone" Activities** Every Friday, a different group of children of mixed ages participate in various woodland activities as part of their school curriculum. GWCP is co-operating with their teachers in helping to organise a map reading-treasure hunt-nature study and the construction of newt habitats. We have also purchased and presented the school with 8 "helping hands" so that they can practice their litter picking skills. To this end we would like to thank Tesco for providing the litter bags and disposable gloves.
- **New Seat** Our grateful thanks go to Dick Armstrong for constructing this superb seat to sit alongside the table located on our wild flower meadow in Moore's Lane. This will be much appreciated for picnics when the Summer sunshine arrives. We all send our very best wishes to Dick's wife Linda, now recovering from a severe illness, and we hope that it will not be too long before she is able to take part again in our work parties.
- **New Members** Several new members have recently joined so we are pleased to now have on board: Ken Larter, Jenny Jackson, David Barwick, Roy Gardner and Richard Friend. Student Spencer Tooke is also working with us as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. We would also like to give a very warm welcome to our new Rector, Rev Trevor Riess and his wife Patricia. We hope they will be very happy here.

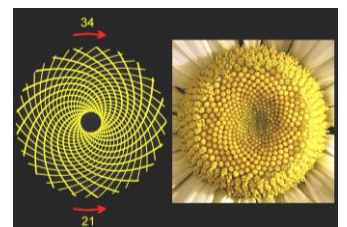


Dick's Seat

Nature Notes

Nature's Numbers

What are the next numbers in this series? **2 3 5 8 13 21 34 ?** You're right, they are **55 89 144** because each number is the sum of the two preceding numbers. They are called **Fibonacci Numbers** and they occur all over the place in Nature, such as the number of petals in a flower, or the spirals in a seed head, a pine cone, a cauliflower or a pineapple. Some flowers have 3 petals, there are dozens with 5 petals, quite a lot with 8 or 13 or 21 petals, but try and find one with 4, 7 or 9, there are very few. [Even a narcissus with 6 petals actually has two sets of 3]. The seeds in a daisy head form spirals, 34 are clockwise and 21 are anticlockwise. Both are Fibonacci numbers. **Why is this?** Plants grow cells in spirals so that no matter how large the seed head becomes they are always **uniformly packed** so that each gets maximum light and, geometrically, this follows the Fibonacci number sequence. Fibonacci was the nickname given to Leonardo de Pisa who, in 1202, said that his series of numbers illustrated *how the rabbit population would increase if an adult and its single offspring each produced just one more baby rabbit!* Anyway next time you buy a *Romanesque* from Tesco, check out those spirals. **They are classic Fibonacci.**



Daisy Seed Head